

News Release

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“Bag Lady Utilizes Women’s Cooperative As The Model for Growth”

Washington, DC - Pauline Lewis of Oovoo Design didn’t fully realize how life-changing one introductory class at the Women’s Business Center/SBDC in Springfield, Virginia could be when she signed up four years ago. Within weeks of taking the class, she quit her day job as a successful international market researcher and headed east on a backpacking trip through Vietnam. During her trip Pauline was invited to observe a women’s cooperative. “From the moment I stepped into the small house where eight women were sitting in an embroidery circle, I knew that I wanted to work with them. I knew right then and there that I would have a company that incorporated embroidery, for women by women.” The seeds of what she learned back in Virginia during her class at the Women’s Business Center started to take root in Vietnam and Oovoo Design was born.

Now, four years later, Pauline has successfully co-designed, marketed, and sold her unique handbags for seven seasons. She sells to over 500 boutiques, galleries, and museum stores. Oovoo Design is now a multiple award-winning company that has been written up in TIME magazine, The Washington Post Magazine and countless other media sources.

In addition to creating a niche market of hand-crafted artisan bags, Oovoo Design is a socially responsible company that continues to work with women’s cooperatives in Vietnam. Pauline plans to expand Oovoo Design into other product categories and work with women’s cooperatives in Cambodia and Laos. Her mission is to be the most socially responsible accessories company in North America, giving back in multiple ways to countries in every continent, utilizing women’s cooperatives as the model for her growth.

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